

**QA-577**

**Bowser Chapel and Carmichael "Colored" School  
John Wesley United Methodist Church  
836 Arrington Road  
Queenstown vicinity, Queen Anne's County**

**Constructed ca. 1890 with late twentieth-century alterations (church); ca. 1930 (school)  
Private**

Bowser Chapel and the Carmichael "Colored" School are almost three miles southeast of Queenstown, in Queen Anne's County. They stand on the north side of Arrington Road, approximately one-tenth of a mile northeast of its intersection with Carmichael Road. The heavily altered, circa-1890 church faces south, towards Arrington Road. The circa-1930 school is situated to the west of the church, and faces east. The church's cemetery is located across Arrington Road, approximately one-tenth of a mile east-southeast of the church building. The cemetery is situated behind a building that, according to local residents, is the former church parsonage. One non-historic, prefabricated shed stands directly behind the church.

In 1865, African Americans formed the congregation that would later become John Wesley United Methodist Church. Originally called Bowser Chapel, the church and cemetery illustrate the importance of churches in African-American communities as well as African Americans' desire for autonomy within their religious institutions. In the decades after the Civil War, residents of the historically African-American community of Bowser's Chapel-Carmichael (QA-578) also built a school where their children could receive an education, something that white citizens denied to African-American citizens in the county. The school, which later became part of a racially segregated public school system, reflects African Americans' desire for education and the history of racial segregation in Queen Anne's County.

Inventory No. QA-577

**1. Name of Property** (indicate preferred name)

historic Bowser Chapel and Carmichael "Colored" School (preferred)

other	John Wesley United Methodist Church (current)
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## 2. Location

street and number 836 Arrington Road \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town	Queenstown, MD 21658	X	vicinity
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county                      Queen Anne's County

**3. Owner of Property** (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name	John Wesley Methodist Church of Carmichael (cemetery same ownership)
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street and number	PO Box 235	telephone
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city, town	Queenstown	state	MD	zip code	21658-0235
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#### 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.	Queen Anne's County Courthouse	liber	TSP-42	folio	533
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city, town	Centreville, MD	tax map	59	tax parcel	128	tax ID number	05-022525
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<i>cemetery</i>	liber	WFW-5 folio	578	tax map	59	tax parcel	219	tax ID number	05-048931
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## 5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District  
☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District  
☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register  
☐ Recorded by HABS/HAER  
☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## 6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	1
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	2
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion	1
		<input type="checkbox"/> social	0
		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	0
		<input type="checkbox"/> education	0
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> funerary	0
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	2
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	2
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	0
		<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	0
		<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	0
		<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	0
		<input type="checkbox"/> other:	0
			0

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## 7. Description

Inventory No. QA-577

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### Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

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### Summary

Bowser Chapel and the Carmichael "Colored" School are almost three miles southeast of Queenstown, in Queen Anne's County. They stand on the north side of Arrington Road, approximately one-tenth of a mile northeast of its intersection with Carmichael Road. The heavily altered, circa-1890 church faces south, towards Arrington Road. The circa-1930 school is situated to the west of the church, and faces east. The church's cemetery is located across Arrington Road, approximately one-tenth of a mile east-southeast of the church building. The cemetery is situated behind a building that, according to local residents, is the former church parsonage. One non-historic, prefabricated shed stands directly behind the church.

### Description

#### Bowser Chapel

According to a now free-standing cornerstone, the one-story, wood-frame, front-gabled Bowser Chapel was constructed in 1890. The church's exterior was heavily altered in 1983. A wood-frame, gable-roofed meeting hall is attached to the west elevation of the church via a hyphen; the construction of both of these structures appears to be contemporaneous with the alteration of the church. A shed-roofed, 1983 addition occupies the central two-thirds of the church's east elevation. The front of the church has been extended forward, giving the façade a flat, almost triangular appearance. A small steeple is attached to the top of this extended façade.

The church building rests upon a poured-concrete foundation, while the meeting hall and hyphen have cinder-block foundations. The east addition also has a cinder-block foundation, but it has been parged. The entire building is clad with vinyl siding, and the majority of the windows have been replaced with six-over-six, double-hung, vinyl sash. The main entry is centered in the one-bay façade; it is occupied by a two-leaf vinyl entry door with a replacement, vinyl, Colonial Revival surround. A nine-light, vinyl, oculus window pierces the gable. The only remaining pre-alteration windows are located in the rear of the church building itself, one in the center of the north elevation, and two in the west elevation. All three of these windows are six-over-six, double-hung, wood sash; the southernmost window in the west elevation is taller than the other two. Entry to the meeting hall is provided through a doorway located at the north end of its west elevation.

#### Bowser Chapel Cemetery

The church cemetery is situated on a level, partially wooded, grassy, 1.27-acre lot on the south side of Arrington Road. The lot is L-shaped, extending south from Arrington Road, then running eastward behind the former parsonage. The burials appear to be concentrated in the east section. The cemetery comprises approximately 75 marked burials and numerous unmarked burials. The arched, concrete covers of many of the burial vaults have been left exposed. Some of the graves are organized loosely into rows. Family names represented in the cemetery include Yorker, Griffin, Stewart, Carpenter, Brown, Johnson, Jackson, and Tingle. The most recent burial at the time of the survey was from September 2006.

#### Carmichael "Colored" School

The physical form of the Carmichael "Colored" School fits into a traditional schoolhouse typology. It is a circa-1930, one-story, one-bay, wood-frame structure resting upon a poured-concrete pier foundation. The school building has undergone some alterations, including the construction of a cinder-block, flue chimney, and a cinder-block, shed-roofed addition attached to the north elevation of the building; otherwise, the building's original form appears to be intact. The building is clad with vinyl siding, and a vinyl fascia and soffit mark the roofline. The front-gable roof is clad with asphalt shingles.

A single-leaf, three-light-over-two-panel, wood door is centered in the façade, and a metal vent is located in the gable. Seven window openings pierce the south elevation of the school. The six windows at the east end are evenly spaced. The windows are all nine-over-nine, wood sash, with square-edged wood surrounds. The west elevation is two bays wide. A six-over-six, wood sash window with a

## 8. Significance

Inventory No. QA-577

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/	<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____

### Specific dates

### Architect/Builder

**Construction dates** circa 1890 with late twentieth-century alterations (church); circa 1930 (school)

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register

☐ Maryland Register

☒ not evaluated

### Summary Statement of Significance

In 1865, African-Americans formed the congregation that would later become John Wesley United Methodist Church. Originally called Bowser Chapel, the church and cemetery illustrate the importance of churches in African-American communities as well as African Americans' desire for autonomy within their religious institutions. In the decades after the Civil War, residents of the historically African-American community of Bowser's Chapel-Carmichael (QA-578) also built a school where their children could receive an education, something that white citizens denied to African-American citizens in the county. The school, which later became part of a racially segregated public school system, reflects African Americans' desire for education and the history of racial segregation in Queen Anne's County.

### Historical Narrative

First built after the Civil War and rebuilt several times (it is the current John Wesley United Methodist Church) Bowser Chapel reflects the centrality of religious institutions, especially those of the Methodist denomination, for African Americans in the nineteenth century. In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Baltimore Conference, which included all Methodist congregations in Queen Anne's County, denounced slavery, opposed the slave trade, and forbade its ministers from owning slaves. The anti-slavery stance of the Methodist denomination attracted many African-American converts. In addition, Methodist preachers encouraged their members to reject social distinctions and to acknowledge the equality of all people. For African Americans and others who then occupied subordinate roles in the gender, race, and class hierarchies of the era, the Methodist faith offered opportunities to experience a sense of equality and self-worth and African Americans were able to serve within the church as local preachers and exhorters. However, there were significant limits on African Americans' participation and power in the church. They could not be ordained as ministers and they were excluded from all leadership positions in the church.<sup>1</sup>

In the first half of the nineteenth century, as tensions over slavery rose within religious denominations, whites within the Methodist church who had earlier held out the promise of racial equality began to impose racial segregation on congregations and to restrict opportunities for black preachers. With slavery's end in Maryland in 1865, African-American Methodists pulled away from white churches in order to achieve the autonomy and power that had been and continued to be denied to them in congregations led by white Methodists. According to local tradition, the black church at Carmichael was formed in 1865 and a chapel, known as Bowser Chapel was erected shortly afterwards.<sup>2</sup> In 1874, Bowser and Samuel and Rachel Brice deeded 20 perches of land upon which Bowser's Chapel stood to the church trustees who included: Robert Scott, Frederick Flamer, John Stewart, Nicolas Stewart, Eliphalet Bryan, Samuel Nichols, and John Samuel Johnson.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Donald Mathews, *Religion in the Old South* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), pp. 189-197; Cynthia Lynn Lyerly, *Methodism and the Southern Mind, 1770-1810* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 47-72.

<sup>2</sup> Delores Roberts, "Carmichael" *The Black Arts Festival of Queen Anne's County, Theme: "Black Horizons in Queen Anne's County"*, program (Centreville, Md.: Queen Anne's County Branch N.A.A.C.P. [National Association for the Advancement of Colored People], 10 June 1978), p. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Queen Anne's County Land Records, Liber WAGH 1, folio 101.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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Inventory No. QA-577

*See continuation sheet.*

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## 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of surveyed property church: 1.22 acres; cemetery: 1.27 acres

Acreage of historical setting church: 2 acres; cemetery: 1.85 acres

Quadrangle name Queenstown (school) and Wye Mills (church and cemetery) Quadrangle scale: 1:24,000 (7.5 minute)

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

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Bowser Chapel's property boundary is defined by the current parcel boundaries shown on tax map 59, grid 23, parcel 128 in Queen Anne's County, Maryland. The Bowser Chapel cemetery property boundary is defined by the current parcel boundaries shown on tax map 59, grid 24, parcel 219 in Queen Anne's County, Maryland.

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## 11. Form Prepared by

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name/title	Kathryn Gettings Smith and Gerald M. Maready, Jr., Architectural Historians		
organization	History Matters, LLC	date	November 16, 2007
street & number	1502 21 <sup>st</sup> Street, NW, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor	telephone	202-223-8845
city or town	Washington	state	DC

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Maryland Department of Planning  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023  
410-514-7600

# Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. QA-577

Name: Bowser Chapel and Carmichael "Colored" School  
Continuation Sheet

Number 7 Page 1

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square-edged wood surround occupies the northernmost bay, while a doorway matching that on the façade is located in the southernmost bay. A metal vent like that found in the façade occupies the west elevation's gable end. The north elevation is devoid of fenestration.



# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. QA-577

Name: Bowser Chapel and Carmichael "Colored" School  
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 1

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After the Civil War, churches were significant institutions in African-American society in Queen Anne's County and throughout the former slave states. Churches such as Bowser Chapel served as political, religious, and social centers, providing aid and support to community members in a variety of ways. For instance, at church cemeteries, members of the congregation could generally acquire burial space at little or no cost.

In 1874, the same year that local residents purchased land for the Bowser Chapel, James Bowser and two other African Americans, Frederick Flamer and John Stewart, purchased a quarter-acre lot adjacent to James Bowser's lot in order to build a school for "colored children." In 1877, the school occupied a lot on the south side of Arrington Road directly across from the church, which stood on the north side of the road. Both structures were later rebuilt; the church was rebuilt in 1890 and the school was rebuilt circa 1900. The school was moved to the north side of the road prior to 1904.<sup>4</sup> Early teachers at what became known as the Carmichael "Colored" School, included Mrs. Lizzie Stewart (the first African American teacher to teach at the school), Ned Emory, Laura Lockman, Rufus Wilson, Catherine Howard, and Rebecca and Elva Goldsborough.<sup>5</sup> In 1958, four years after the U.S. Supreme Court ordered the desegregation of public schools, the Methodist congregation in Bowser's Chapel purchased the school building.

Schools were central to the development of African American communities in Queen Anne's County and throughout the southern United States. After denying access to education to African Americans before the Civil War, white Marylanders continued to deny access to public education when the Civil War ended.<sup>6</sup> In response, wherever possible, African Americans acquired land and built their own schools.

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<sup>4</sup> United States Geological Survey, St. Michaels, MD Quadrangle (15 Minute Series), 1904.

<sup>5</sup> Roberts, "Carmichael."

<sup>6</sup> Robert J. Brugger, *Maryland, A Middle Temperament, 1634-1980* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), p. 308.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of

### Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. QA-577

Name: Bowser Chapel and Carmichael "Colored" School  
Continuation Sheet

Number 8 Page 2

#### Chain of Title

<u>QA-577</u>	<u>Carmichael "Colored" School</u>
27 August 1958	School Board of Queen Anne's County to trustees of John Wesley UM Church of Carmichael Liber TSP 42, folio 533 2 roods, 35.3 perches November 1954, School Board meets & declares that the property known as the Carmichael Colored Elementary School is "no longer needed for educational purposes". Sell it to the church trustees who pay \$500 in installments from 1955 to 1958.
28 May 1892	Emory & Sarah Brice to School Commissioners of Queen Anne's County Liber WD 7, folio 481 2 roods, 35.3 perches (no mention of a school building on the site)
18 February 1889	Rachel Brice, John Henry Wright, and Fannie Wright (wife) (nee Brice) to Emory Brice Liber WD 2, folio 513 All of Samuel Brice's land
13 January 1866	William H. & Marcia Forman to Samuel Brice Liber SED 2, folio 202 2 acres 33 perches adjoining lot of James Bowser in Wye Neck; part of Frustian
<u>QA-577</u>	<u>Bowser Chapel</u>
23 May 1874	Samuel & Rachel Brice and James Bowser to Trustees of Bowsers Chapel Liber WAGH 1, folio 100 All that lot of land upon which the chapel stands; 20 perches of land
13 January 1866	William H. & Marcia Forman to Samuel Brice Liber SED 2, folio 202 2 acres 33 perches adjoining lot of James Bowser in Wye Neck; part of Frustian
13 January 1866	William H. & Marcia Forman to James Bowser Liber SED 2, folio 203 3 acres 18 perches in Wye Neck; part of Frustian



# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of

### Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. QA-577

Name: Bowser Chapel and Carmichael "Colored" School  
Continuation Sheet

Number 9 Page 1

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#### Major Bibliographical References

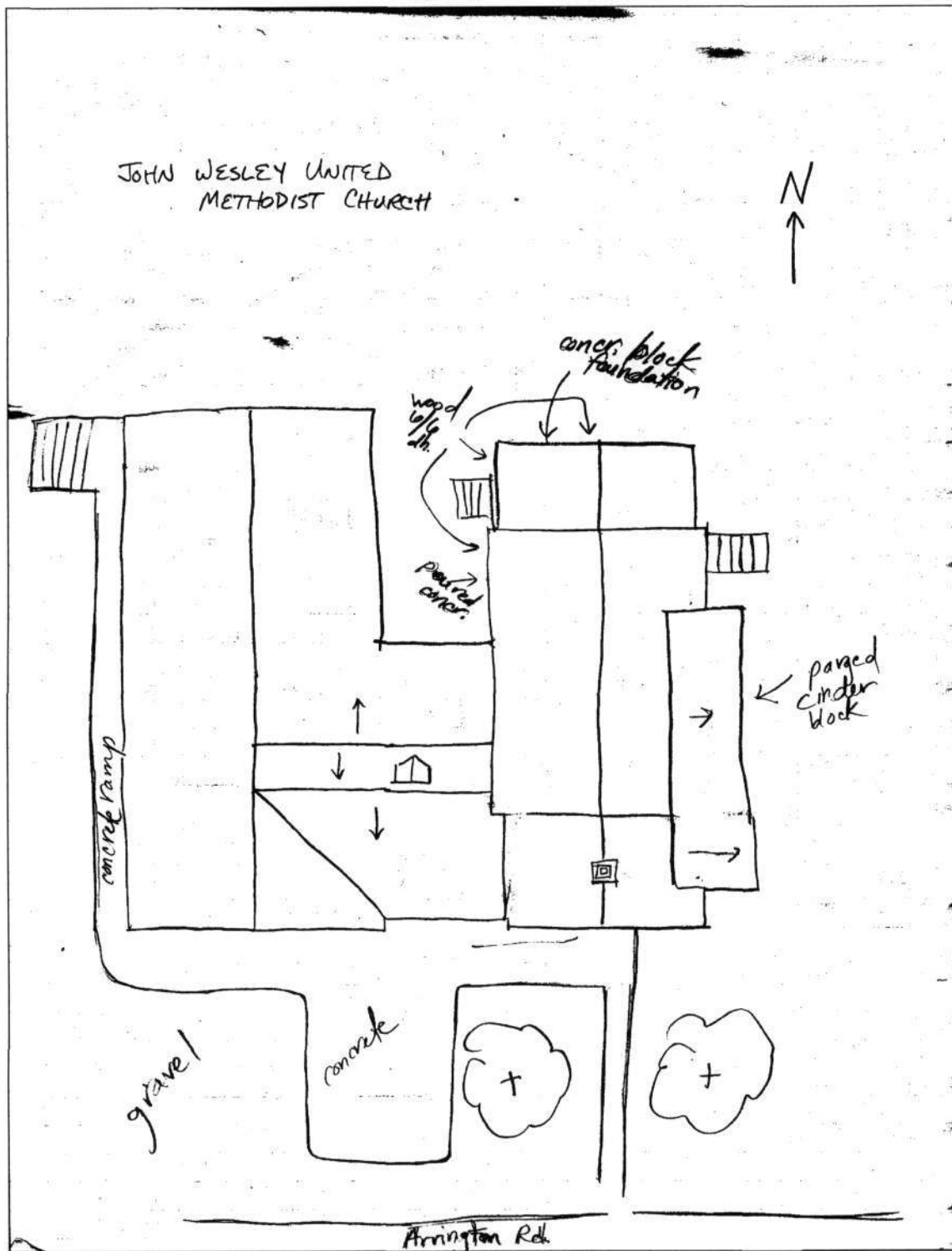
Brugger, Robert J. *Maryland, A Middle Temperament, 1634-1980*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988.

Lyerly, Cynthia Lynn. *Methodism and the Southern Mind, 1770-1810*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Mathews, Donald. *Religion in the Old South*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977.

Roberts, Delores. "Carmichael." *The Black Arts Festival of Queen Anne's County, Theme: "Black Horizons in Queen Anne's County"*. Program. Centreville, Md.: Queen Anne's County Branch N.A.A.C.P. [National Association for the Advancement of Colored People], 10 June 1978. p. 13.

United States Geological Survey. St. Michaels, MD Quadrangle (15 Minute Series), 1904.

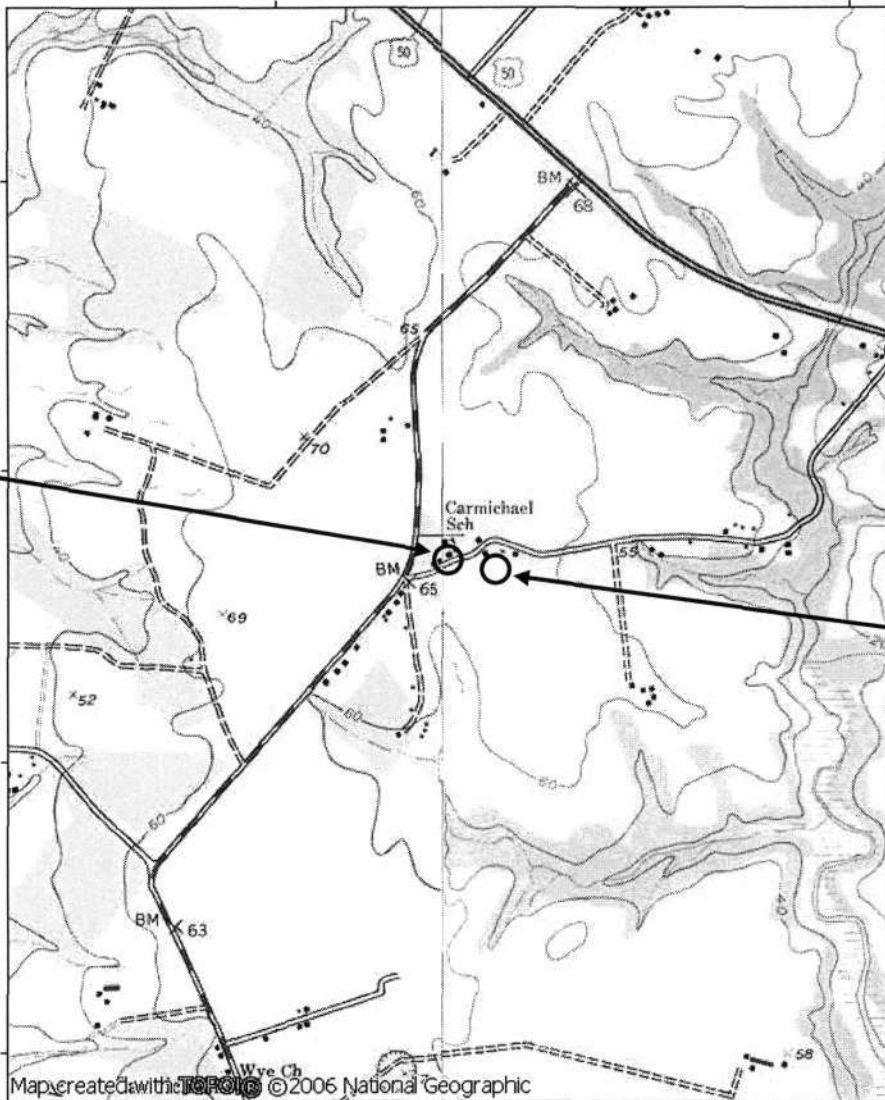


Site Plan  
QA--577  
Bowser Chapel and Carmichael  
"Colored" School  
836 Arrington Road  
Queenstown vicinity

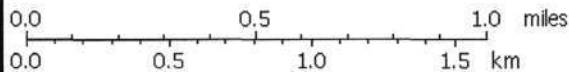
not to scale



402000m E. WGS84 Zone 18S 404000m E.



**QA-577**  
**Bowser Chapel and**  
**Carmichael "Colored"**  
**School**  
**836 Arrington Road**  
**Queenstown vicinity**  
**Queen Anne's County**



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## Queenstown Quadrangle

## Wye Mills Quadrangle



QA-577

BOWSER CHAPEL + CARMICHAEL "COLORED" SCHOOL  
828-836 ARRINGTON RD, QUEENSTOWN  
QUEEN ANNE'S CO, MD  
HISTORY MATTERS, LLC

3/2007

MD SHPO

SCHOOL, LOOKING NORTHWEST

1 of 7





QA-577

Bowser Chapel and

CARMICHAEL "COLORED" SCHOOL

828-836 ARRINGTON ROAD, QUEENSTOWN

QUEEN ANNE'S Co., MD

HISTORY MATTERS, LLC

3/2007

MD SHPO

SCHOOL, LOOKING NORTHEAST

2 of 7



QA-577

BOWSER CHAPEL + CARMICHAEL "COLORED" SCHOOL  
828-836 ARRINGTON ROAD, QUEENSTOWN

QUEEN ANNE'S CO., MD

HISTORY MATTERS, LLC

3/2007

MD SHPO

SCHOOL, LOOKING SOUTHWEST

3 of 7



QA-577

BOWSER CHAPEL + CARMICHAEL "COLORED" SCHOOL

828-836 ARRINGTON ROAD, QUEENSTOWN

QUEEN ANNE'S CO., MD

HISTORY MATTERS, LLC

3/2007

MD SHPO

CHURCH - SOUTH ELEVATION (FACADE)

4 of 7





QA-577

BOWSER CHAPEL + CARMICHAEL "COLORED" SCHOOL

828-836 ARRINGTON RD., QUEENSTOWN

QUEEN ANNE'S CO., MD

HISTORY MATTERS, LLC

3/2007

MD SHPO

CHURCH - LOOKING NORTHEAST

5 of 7



QA-577

BOWSER CHAPEL + CARMICHAEL "COLORED" SCHOOL

828-836 ARRINGTON RD., QUEENSTOWN

QUEEN ANNE'S CO, MD

HISTORY MATTERS, LLC

3/2007

MD SHPO

CHURCH - LOOKING SOUTHEAST AT REAR

6 of 7



QA-577

BOWSER CHAPEL + CARMICHAEL "COLORED" SCHOOL

828-836 ARRINGTON RD., QUEENSTOWN

QUEEN ANNE'S CO., MD

HISTORY MATTERS, LLC

3/2007

MD SHPO

SHED AT REAR OF CHURCH - LOOKING NORTHEAST

7 of 7